ALTS 2014: Learning for All

Over 100 members of staff, along with colleagues from Robert Gordon University, attended the sixth Annual Learning & Teaching Symposium which took place on Wednesday 15th January 2014 with the theme 'Learning for All'.

The Symposium provided a forum for staff to hear about current practice, and discuss issues around student background, internationalisation, transition to Higher Education, flexible delivery, distance learning and equality and diversity. There was also a display of posters relevant to the topic.

The keynote speaker this year was Professor Frank Coton, Vice-Principal for Learning & Teaching at the University of Glasgow. Professor Coton is a member of the Scottish Funding Council's Access & Inclusion Committee and Chair of the West of Scotland Schools for Higher Education Programme Management Committee which coordinates widening participation activities in the West of Scotland.

The Symposium topic complements the current QAA (Scotland) Enhancement Theme, ‘Developing and Supporting the Curriculum’.

Programme

Click here to download the programme as a Word Document

Welcome & Introduction Professor Peter McGeorge, Vice-Principal for Learning & Teaching, University of Aberdeen

Keynote: Supporting Academic Writing at the University of Glasgow Professor Frank Coton, Vice-Principal for Learning & Teaching, University of Glasgow The University of Glasgow Writing Centre has its roots in staff concerns around writing skills highlighted by Quality Assurance and Enhancement processes in the years leading up to 2006. At the same time, the importance of writing skills in relation to student retention was also being recognised across the institution and, in response, academic staff were beginning to develop interventions to enhance writing skills amongst...
the student body. One of the primary mechanisms used to support bottom-up innovation at Glasgow is the Learning and Teaching Development Fund (LTDF) and this was used by two groups within the University to pilot different approaches to writing skills development between 2006 and 2009. The two approaches could not be more different. The Academic Writing Skills Programme, involved a direct intervention at entry to the University, initially for Arts students, and the Writing for Results project provided scalable online support, initially for Science based students, in their later years. This presentation will explore how these two strategically funded projects evolved and were ultimately supported from core funds through the formation of the University Writing Centre. In doing so, the presentation will also consider the types of intervention being used to support Academic Writing at Glasgow and their effectiveness.

**Poster Display (over lunch)**

Collaboration with Industry to Develop and Deliver Postgraduate Teaching  
Dr Paul Davidson, School of Engineering

Making Learning Accessible using Collaborate  
Dr Yvonne Bain and Sarah Cornelius, School of Education

Collaborate web conferencing software has become widely used within the School of Education to engage learners at a distance and support new ways of working and learning. This presentation will provide some examples of the use of Collaborate to make learning accessible, support collaborative learning, and provide choice and flexibility. The examples include using Collaborate to provide interactive workshops, for research supervision and to engage distant participants in local events. It will consider the impact of live online learning on tutors and learners and discuss issues that need to be considered before using Collaborate to provide ‘learning for all’.

Parallel Discussion Sessions

1. Institutional Policies on Widening Access  
Professor Peter McGeorge, Vice-Principal for Learning & Teaching

2. Open Access and Open Educational Resources  
Dr Colin Calder, Centre for Academic Development

Dr Debbi Marais, Applied Health Sciences

4. Providing an Inclusive Learning Experience  
Janine Chalmers, Policy, Planning & Governance and Dr Lucy Foley, Head of Student Support
Summary and Panel Discussion

Chaired by Professor Peter McGeorge, Vice-Principal for Learning & Teaching

Poster Display

We received a good response to our call for posters from colleagues and displayed 15 during the lunchtime session. Please click on the poster title below to view full size.

The use of QuestionMark to deliver flexible “decision-driven” learning

S Tucker, School of Medical Sciences, CLSM
Use of student-chosen, case-based problem-solving assessments to contextualise learning in Medical Sciences

D Scott, School of Medical Sciences, CLSM
Employability programme: incorporating different career interests and levels of experience

A Irwin, School of Psychology, CLSM
Developing an interactive support database for pharmacokinetics teaching

S Tucker, H Wallace, S Barnett, School of Medical Sciences, CLSM

Development of interactive online resources to support and enhance numerical skills among Medical Science students

S Tucker, V Psalmom, A Jenkinson, M Richard, D Shewan, School of Medical Sciences, CLSM
Written assessments in Year 2 MBChB – 8 steps to an inclusive exam

A Venkatesh, E Bate, A Denison, F Parker, D Gerrie, E Sutherland, Medical & Dental Education, CLSM

Students 4 Students: Transitional Mentoring for New Undergraduates

J Barrow, Medical Sciences, CLSM
Adaptive testing: a response to student diversity?

M Barker, Biological Sciences, CLSM
Generating user tailored teaching materials

X Han, Computing Science, CoPS

Coastal Communities & Adaptation to Climate Change: Student-led workshops for capacity building

D Green, J Hagon, E Cogliano, Geography & Environment, CoPS

Collaborating & Assessing Online in the Flexible Archaeology Programme

C Wickham-Jones, Archaeology, School of Geosciences, CoPS

Archaeology online? How MyAberdeen and Collaborate were used to provide engaging online courses

C Wickham-Jones, S Preston, Archaeology & Centre for Academic Development, CoPS
Flexible Summative Assessment: Different Routes, Same Learning Outcomes

P Marston, D Comber, J Perkins, Centre for Academic Development

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Speaker Biographies

Professor Frank Coton, Vice-Principal for Learning & Teaching, University of Glasgow

Frank Coton is currently Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) and Professor of Low Speed Aerodynamics at the University of Glasgow where, until December 2009, he was Dean of the Faculty of Engineering. He is a past Chair of both the Scottish Deans of Science and Engineering and the Applied Aerodynamics Committee of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. He is also currently a member of the West Regional Advisory Board of Scottish Enterprise.

He is a member of the University of Glasgow Senior Management Group and has responsibility for the development of educational policy and strategy and all teaching quality processes. He has direct line-management responsibility for the Director of the Learning and Teaching Centre which supports academic development, technology enhanced learning and teaching and student learning. He is also a member of the SFC Access and Inclusion Committee and is Chair of the West of Scotland Schools for Higher Education Programme.
Management Committee which coordinates widening participation activities in the West of Scotland.

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Professor Peter McGeorge, Vice-Principal for Learning & Teaching, University of Aberdeen

Professor Peter McGeorge is Vice Principal for Learning & Teaching, with responsibility for leading the University’s commitment to continually improving the quality of academic experience for our students, achieving the benefits of our curriculum reform project, and widening access and participation.

Professor McGeorge studied Behavioural Sciences (Psychology/Zoology) at the University of Nottingham before completing his PhD in Experimental Psychology. He moved to the University of Aberdeen in 1990 to become a post-doctoral research fellow and subsequently a lecturer in the School of Psychology. In 2004 he became the Head of School of Psychology within the College of Life Sciences and Medicine and in 2010 was appointed Vice-Principal for Learning and Teaching.

Peter McGeorge has a broad range of research interests and publications covering the area of visual attention in both healthy and clinical populations.

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Dr Paul Davidson, School of Engineering

Dr Paul Davidson is the Director of Undergraduate Teaching of the School of Engineering, and the Programme Coordinator for the Distance Learning MSc in Oil and Gas Structural Engineering. His presentation will be about this MSc programme, which has been developed out of his extensive contacts with Industry, through delivering CPD courses, carrying out Engineering Consultancy, and acting as an Expert Witness.

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Dr Yvonne Bain, School of Education
Yvonne is a Lecturer in education, with responsibilities as Depute Head of School (Strategic Planning) and Teaching Qualification in Further Education (TQFE) Programme management. Her professional teaching career started as a teacher of Physics and Computing in Secondary schools and now focuses on professional development and learning of teachers and lecturers in FE and HE settings. Her research interests draw from her long held interest in the use of ICT for learning and teaching, and online learning in particular. Yvonne has facilitated online learning for many years within online and blended learning courses for both distance learning and campus-based student groups.

Sarah Cornelius, School of Education

Sarah is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education. She uses Collaborate to engage learners undertaking teaching qualifications for Further and Higher Education, and to support researchers, including those undertaking Masters level work based projects/dissertations and PhDs. Sarah’s research interests are in distance and online learning and the outputs of several research projects into teaching and learning with web conferencing have informed a co-authored book ‘Live online learning: strategies for the web conferencing classroom’ which will be published by Palgrave MacMillan in 2014.

Dr Colin Calder, Centre for Academic Development
Colin is a Senior Adviser in the Centre for Academic Development. He has over twenty years of experience supporting learning and teaching in Higher Education, with a longstanding interest in digital resources and their impact on student experience. He is a fellow of the Higher Education Academy and course co-ordinator for the University of Aberdeen PgCert eLearning in Higher Education.

Dr Debbi Marais, Applied Health Sciences

Dr Debbi Marais is a qualified Dietitian with extensive academic experience at Stellenbosch University in South Africa and the University of Aberdeen. She is a Fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy with expertise in teaching and assessment at under- and postgraduate levels; programme and course coordination; quality assurance, curriculum development and reform; student recruitment & selection and pastoral care. Debbi is committed to supporting and promoting innovative teaching, reflective practice and enhancing the student experience and was awarded the Stellenbosch University Rector's award for Teaching Excellence in 2007. She is the Division of Applied Health Sciences Postgraduate Coordinator and a member of the University Postgraduate committee, MyAberdeen Steering Group, Online course delivery working group and College Graduate School postgraduate advisory groups. She is a post-doctoral researcher with a focus on Public Health Nutrition (food security, infant and young child feeding, nutrition education, international nutrition especially developing countries, nutritional status assessment) and Educational (employability, teaching international students, e-learning and distance education) research.

Dr Lucy Foley, Head of Student Support
Lucy Foley has been Head of Student Support at the University since January 2010. Prior to that, she had been the University’s Senior Disability Adviser and Student Support Adviser for a number of years and had a secondment as Assistant Director of the Scottish Disability Team from 2002-2006. She sits on the Disabled Student Advisory Group at the Scottish Government, where she represents the Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education (Scotland).